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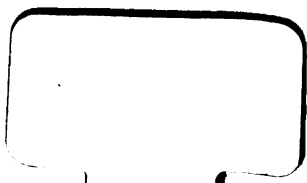
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HEALTH.

Health is best for mortal man; next beauty; thirdly, well gotten wealth; fourthly, the pleasures of youth among friends.

SIMONIDES.

HEALTH.

IF there has been some difference of opinion as to the advantage of wealth, with reference to health all are agreed.

“Health,” said Simonides long ago, “is best for mortal man ; next beauty ; thirdly, well gotten wealth ; fourthly, the pleasure of youth among friends.” “Life,” says Longfellow, “without health is a burden, with health is a joy and gladness.” Empedocles delivered the people of Selinus from a pestilence by draining a marsh, and was hailed as a Demigod. We are told that a coin was struck in his honor, representing the Philosopher in the act of staying the hand of Phœbus.

We scarcely realize, I think, how much we owe to Doctors. Our system of Medicine seems so natural and obvious that it hardly occurs to us as somewhat new and exceptional. When we are ill we send for a Physician ; he prescribes some medicine ; we take it, and pay his fee. But among the lower races of men pain and illness are often attributed to the presence of evil spirits. The Medicine Man is a Priest, or rather a Sorcerer, more

than a true Doctor, and his effort is to exorcise the evil spirit.

In other countries where some advance has been made, a charm is written on a board, washed off, and drunk. In some cases the medicine is taken, not by the patient, but by the Doctor. Such a system, however, is generally transient; it is naturally discouraged by the Profession, and is indeed incompatible with a large practice. Even as regards the payment we find very different systems. The Chinese pay their medical man as long as they are well, and stop his salary as soon as they are ill. In ancient Egypt we are told that the patient feed the Doctor for the first few days, after which the Doctor paid the patient until he made him well. This is a fascinating system, but might afford too much temptation to heroic remedies.

On the whole our plan seems the best, though it does not offer adequate encouragement to discovery and research. We do not appreciate how much we owe to the discoveries of such men as Hunter and Jenner, Simpson and Lister. And yet in the matter of health we can generally do more for ourselves than the greatest Doctors can for us.

But if all are agreed as to the blessing of health, there are many who will not take the little trouble, or submit to the slight sacrifices, necessary to maintain it. Many, indeed, deliberately ruin their own health, and incur the certainty of an early grave, or an old age of suffering.

No doubt some inherit a constitution which renders health almost unattainable. Pope spoke of that long disease, his life. Many indeed may say, "I suffer, therefore I am." But happily these cases are exceptional. Most of us might be well, if we would. It is very much our own fault that we are ill. We do those things which we ought not to do, and we leave undone those things which we ought to have done, and then we wonder there is no health in us.

We all know that we can make ourselves ill, but few perhaps realize how much we can do to keep ourselves well. Much of our suffering is self-inflicted. It has been observed that among the ancient Egyptians the chief aim of life seemed to be to be well buried. Many, however, live even now as if this were the principal object of their existence.

Like Naaman, we expect our health to be the subject of some miraculous interference, and neglect the homely precautions by which it might be secured.

I am inclined to doubt whether the study of health is sufficiently impressed on the minds of those entering life. Not that it is desirable to potter over minor ailments, to con over books on illnesses, or experiment on ourselves with medicine. Far from it. The less we fancy ourselves ill, or bother about little bodily discomforts, the more likely perhaps we are to preserve our health.

It is, however, a different matter to study the general conditions of health. A well-known prov-

erb tells us that every one is a fool or a physician at forty. Unfortunately, however, many persons are invalids at forty as well as physicians.

Ill-health, however, is no excuse for moroseness. If we have one disease we may at least congratulate ourselves that we are escaping all the rest. Sydney Smith, ever ready to look on the bright side of things, once, when borne down by suffering, wrote to a friend that he had gout, asthma, and seven other maladies, but was "otherwise very well;" and many of the greatest invalids have borne their sufferings with cheerfulness and good spirits.

It is said that the celebrated physiognomist, Campanella, could so abstract his attention from any sufferings of his body, that he was even able to endure the rack without much pain; and whoever has the power of concentrating his attention and controlling his will, can emancipate himself from most of the minor miseries of life. He may have much cause for anxiety, his body may be the seat of severe suffering, and yet his mind will remain serene and unaffected; he may triumph over care and pain.

But many have undergone much unnecessary suffering, and valuable lives have often been lost, through ignorance or carelessness. We cannot but fancy that the lives of many great men might have been much prolonged by the exercise of a little ordinary care.

If we take musicians only, what a grievous loss

to the world it is that Pergolesi should have died at twenty-six, Schubert at thirty-one, Mozart at thirty-five, Purcell at thirty-seven, and Mendelssohn at thirty-eight.

In the old Greek myth the life of Meleager was indissolubly connected by fate with the existence of a particular log of wood. As long as this was kept safe by Althæa, his mother, Meleager bore a charmed life. It seems wonderful that we do not watch with equal care over our body, on the state of which happiness so much depends.

The requisites of health are plain enough ; regular habits, daily exercise, cleanliness, and moderation in all things—in eating as well as in drinking—would keep most people well.

I need not here dwell on the evils of drinking, but we perhaps scarcely realize how much of the suffering and ill-humor of life is due to over-eating. Dyspepsia, for instance, from which so many suffer, is in nine cases out of ten their own fault, and arises from the combination of too much food with too little exercise. To lengthen your life, says an old proverb, shorten your meals. Plain living and high thinking will secure health for most of us, though it matters, perhaps, comparatively little what a healthy man eats, so long as he does not eat too much.

Mr. Gladstone has told us that the splendid health he enjoys is greatly due to his having early learnt one simple physiological maxim, and laid it

down as a rule for himself always to make twenty-five bites at every bit of meat.

“Go to your banquet then, but use delight,
So as to rise still with an appetite.”

No doubt, however, though the rule not to eat or drink too much is simple enough in theory, it is not quite so easy in application. There have been many Esaus who sold their birthright of health for a mess of pottage.

Moreover, it may seem paradoxical, but it is certainly true, that in the long run the moderate man will derive more enjoyment even from eating and drinking, than the glutton or the drunkard will ever obtain. They know not what it is to enjoy “the exquisite taste of common dry bread.”

And yet even if we were to consider merely the pleasure to be derived from eating and drinking, the same rule would hold good. A lunch of bread and cheese after a good walk is more enjoyable than a Lord Mayor’s feast. Without wishing, like Apicius, for the neck of a stork, so that he might enjoy his dinner longer, we must not be ungrateful for the enjoyment we derive from eating and drinking, even though they be amongst the least æsthetic of our pleasures. They are homely, no doubt, but they come morning, noon, and night, and are not the less real because they have reference to the body rather than the soul.

We speak truly of a healthy appetite, for it is a good test of our bodily condition; and indeed in some cases of our mental state also. That

“There cometh no good thing
Apart from toil to mortals,”

is especially true with reference to appetite; to sit down to a dinner, however simple, after a walk with a friend among the mountains or along the shore, is no insignificant pleasure.

Cheerfulness and good humor, moreover, during meals are not only pleasant in themselves, but conduce greatly to health.

It has been said that hunger is the best sauce, but most would prefer some good stories at a feast even to a good appetite; and who would not like to have it said of him, as of Biron by Rosaline—

“A merrier man
Within the limit of becoming mirth
I never spent an hour’s talk withal.”

In the three great “Banquets” of Plato, Xenophon, and Plutarch, the food is not even mentioned.

In the words of the old Lambeth adage—

“What is a merry man?
Let him do what he can
To entertain his guests
With wine and pleasant jests,
Yet if his wife do frown
All merrymment goes down.”

What salt is to food, wit and humor are to conversation and literature. "You do not," an amusing writer in the *Cornhill* has said, "expect humor in Thomas à Kempis or Hebrew Prophets;" but we have Solomon's authority that there is a time to laugh, as well as to weep.

"To read a good comedy is to keep the best company in the world, when the best things are said, and the most amusing things happen."

It is not without reason that every one resents the imputation of being unable to see a joke.

Laughter appears to be the special prerogative of man. The higher animals present us with proof of evident, if not highly developed reasoning power, but it is more than doubtful whether they are capable of appreciating a joke.

Wit, moreover, has solved many difficulties and decided many controversies.

"Ridicule shall frequently prevail,
And cut the knot when graver reasons fail."

A careless song, says Walpole, with a little nonsense in it now and then, does not misbecome a monarch, but it is difficult now to realize that James I. should have regarded skill in punning in his selections of bishops and privy councillors.

The most wasted of all days, says Chamfort, is that on which one has not laughed.

It is, moreover, no small merit of laughter that

it is quite spontaneous. "You cannot force people to laugh; you cannot give a reason why they should laugh; they must laugh of themselves or not at all. . . . If we think we must not laugh, this makes our temptation to laugh the greater." Humor is, moreover, contagious. A witty man may say, as Falstaff does of himself, "I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men."

But one may paraphrase the well-known remark about port wine and say that some jokes may be better than others, but anything which makes one laugh is good. "After all," says Dryden, "it is a good thing to laugh at any rate; and if a straw can tickle a man, it is an instrument of happiness," and I may add, of health.

I have been told that in omitting any mention of smoking I was overlooking one of the real pleasures of life. Not being a smoker myself I cannot perhaps judge; much must depend on the individual temperament; to some nervous natures it certainly appears to be a great comfort; but I have my doubts whether smoking, as a general rule, does add to the pleasures of life. It must, moreover, detract somewhat from the sensitiveness of taste and of smell.

Those who live in cities may almost lay it down as a rule that no time spent out of doors is ever wasted. Fresh air is a cordial of incredible virtue; old families are in all senses country families, not town families; and those who prefer Homer

and Plato and Shakespeare to hares and partridges and foxes must beware that they are not tempted to neglect this great requisite of our nature.

Most Englishmen, however, love open air, and it is probably true that most of us enjoy a game at cricket or golf more than looking at any of the old masters. The love of sport is engraven in the English character. As was said of William Rufus, "he loves the tall deer as he had been their father."

An Oriental traveler is said to have watched a game of cricket and been much astonished at hearing that many of those playing were rich men. He asked why they did not pay some poor people to do it for them.

Wordsworth made it a rule to go out every day, and he used to say that as he never consulted the weather, he never had to consult the physicians.

It always seems to be raining harder than it really is when you look at the weather through the window. Even in winter, though the landscape often seems cheerless and bare enough when you look at it from the fireside, still it is far better to go out, even if you have to brave the storm: when you are once out of doors the touch of earth and the breath of the fresh air gives you fresh life and energy. Men, like trees, live in great part on air.

After a gallop over the downs, a row on the river, a sea voyage, a walk by the seashore or in the woods

"The blue above, the music in the air,
The flowers upon the ground,"¹

one feels as if one could say with Henry IV., "*Je me porte comme le Ponte Neuf.*"

The Roman proverb that a child should be taught nothing which he cannot learn standing up, went no doubt into an extreme, but surely we fall into another when we act as if games were the only thing which boys could learn upon their feet.

The love of games among boys is certainly a healthy instinct, and though carried too far in some of our great schools, there can be no question that cricket and football, boating and hockey, bathing and birdnesting, are not only the greatest pleasures, but the best medicines for boys.

We cannot always secure sleep. When important decisions have to be taken, the natural anxiety to come to a right decision will often keep us awake. Nothing, however, is more conducive to healthy sleep than plenty of open air. Then indeed we can enjoy the fresh life of the early morning: "the breezy call of incense-bearing morn."

"At morn the Blackcock trims his jetty wing,
'Tis morning tempts the linnet's blithest lay,
All nature's children feel the matin spring
Of life reviving with reviving day."

Epictetus described himself as "a spirit bearing about a corpse." That seems to me an ungrateful

description. Surely we ought to cherish the body, even if it be but a frail and humble companion. Do we not own to the eye our enjoyment of the beauties of this world and the glories of the Heavens ; to the ear the voices of friends and all the delights of music ; are not the hands most faithful and invaluable instruments, ever ready in case of need, ever willing to do our bidding ; and even the feet bear us without a murmur along the roughest and stoniest paths of life.

With reasonable care, then, most of us may hope to enjoy good health. And yet what a marvellous and complex organization we have !

We are indeed fearfully and wonderfully made. It is

“ Strange that a harp of a thousand strings,
Should keep in tune so long.”

When we consider the marvellous complexity of our bodily organization, it seems a miracle that we should live at all ; much more that the innumerable organs and processes should continue day after day and year after year with so much regularity and so little friction that we are sometimes scarcely conscious of having a body at all.

And yet in that body we have more than 200 bones, of complex and varied forms, any irregularity in, or injury to, which would of course grievously interfere with our movements.

We have over 500 muscles ; each nourished by almost innumerable blood vessels, and regulated

By nerves. One of our muscles, the heart, beats over 30,000,000 times in a year, and if it once stops, all is over.

In the skin are wonderfully varied and complex organs—for instance, over 2,000,000 perspiration glands, which regulate the temperature and communicate with the surface by ducts, which have a total length of some ten miles.

Think of the miles of arteries and veins, of capillaries and nerves; of the blood, with the millions of millions of blood corpuscles, each a microcosm in itself.

Think of the organs of sense,—the eye with its cornea and lens, vitreous humor, aqueous humor, and choroid, culminating in the retina, no thicker than a sheet of paper, and yet consisting of nine distinct layers, the innermost composed of rods and cones, supposed to be the immediate recipients of the undulations of light, and so numerous that in each eye the cones are estimated at over 3,000,000, the rods at over 30,000,000.

Above all, and most wonderful of all, the brain itself. Meinert has calculated that the gray matter of the convolutions alone contains no less than 600,000,000 cells; each cell consists of several thousand visible atoms, and each atom again of many millions of molecules.

And yet with reasonable care we can most of us keep this wonderful organization in health; so that it will work without causing us pain, or even dis-

comfort, for many years; and we may hope that
even when old age comes

“Time may lay his hand
Upon your heart gently, not smiting it
But as a harper lays his open palm
Upon his harp, to deaden its vibrations.”



WEALTH.



WEALTH.

AMBITION often takes the form of a love of money. There are many who have never attempted Art or Music, Poetry or Science; but most people do something for a livelihood, and consequently an increase of income is not only acceptable in itself, but gives a pleasant feeling of success.

Doubt is often expressed whether wealth is any advantage. I do not myself believe that those who are born, as the saying is, with a silver spoon in their mouth, are necessarily any the happier for it. No doubt wealth entails almost more labor than poverty, and certainly more anxiety. Still it must, I think, be confessed that the possession of an income, whatever it may be, which increases somewhat as the years roll on, does add to the comfort of life.

Unquestionably the possession of wealth is by no means unattended by drawbacks. Money and the love of money often go together. The poor man, as Emerson says, is the man who wishes to be rich; and the more a man has, the more he

often longs to be richer. Just as drinking often does but increase thirst; so in many cases the craving for riches does grow with wealth.

This is, of course, especially the case when money is sought for its own sake. Moreover, it is often easier to make money than to keep or to enjoy it. Keeping it is dull and anxious drudgery. The dread of loss may hang like a dark cloud over life. Apicius, when he squandered most of his patrimony, but had still 250,000 crowns left, committed suicide, as Seneca tells us, for fear he should die of hunger.

Wealth is certainly no sinecure. Moreover, the value of money depends partly on knowing what to do with it, partly on the manner in which it is acquired.

“Acquire money, thy friends say, that we also may have some. If I can acquire money and also keep myself modest, and faithful, and magnanimous, point out the way, and I will acquire it. But if you ask me to love the things which are good and my own, in order that you may gain things that are not good, see how unfair and unwise you are. For which would you rather have? Money, or a faithful and modest friend. . . .

“What hinders a man, who has clearly comprehended these things, from living with a light heart, and bearing easily the reins, quietly expecting everything which can happen, and enduring that which has already happened? Would you have me to bear poverty? Come, and you will know

what poverty is when it has found one who can act well the part of a poor man."

We must bear in mind Solon's answer to Croesus, "Sir, if any other come that hath better iron than you, he will be master of all this gold."

Midas is another case in point. He prayed that everything he touched might be turned into gold, and this prayer was granted. His wine turned to gold, his bread turned to gold, his clothes, his very bed.

*"Attonitus novitate mali, divesque miserque,
Effugere optat opes, et quæ modo voverat, odit."*

He is by no means the only man who has suffered from too much gold.

The real truth I take to be that wealth is not necessarily an advantage, but that whether it is so or not depends on the use we make of it. The same, however, might be said of most other opportunities and privileges; Knowledge and Strength, Beauty and Skill, may all be abused; if we neglect or misuse them we are worse off than if we had never had them. Wealth is only a disadvantage in the hands of those who do not know how to use it. It gives the command of so many other things—leisure, the power of helping friends, books, works of art, opportunities and means of travel.

It would, however, be easy to exaggerate the ad-

vantages of money. It is well worth having, and worth working for, but it does not require too great a sacrifice ; not indeed so great as is often offered up to it. A wise proverb tells us that gold may be bought too dear. If wealth is to be valued because it gives leisure, clearly it would be a mistake to sacrifice leisure in the struggle for wealth. Money has no doubt also a tendency to make men poor in spirit. But, on the other hand, what gift is there which is without danger ?

Euripides said that money finds friends for men, and has great (he said the greatest) power among Mankind, cynically adding, "A mighty person indeed is a rich man, especially if his heir be unknown."

Bossuet tells us that "he had no attachment to riches, still if he had only what was barely necessary, he felt himself narrowed, and would lose more than half his talents."

Shelley was certainly not an avaricious man, and yet "I desire money," he said, "because I think I know the use of it. It commands labor, it gives leisure; and to give leisure to those who will employ it in the forwarding of truth is the noblest present an individual can make to the whole."

Many will have felt with Pepys when he quaintly and piously says, "Abroad with my wife, the first time that ever I rode in my own coach ; which do make my heart rejoice and praise God, and pray him to bless it to me, and continue it."

This, indeed, was a somewhat selfish satisfaction. Yet the merchant need not quit nor be ashamed of his profession, bearing in mind only the inscription on the Church of St. Giacomo de Rialto at Venice : " Around this temple let the merchant's law be Just, his weight true, and his covenants faithful. "

If life has been sacrificed to the rolling up of money for its own sake, the very means by which it was acquired will prevent its being enjoyed ; the chill of poverty will have entered into the very bones. The term Miser was happily chosen for such persons ; they are essentially miserable.

" A collector peeps into all the picture shops of Europe for a landscape of Poussin, a crayon sketch of Salvator ; but the Transfiguration, the Last Judgment, the Communion of St. Jerome, and what are as transcendent as these, are on the walls of the Vatican, the Uffizi, or the Louvre, where every footman may see them ; to say nothing of Nature's pictures in every street, of sunsets and sunrises every day, and the sculpture of the human body never absent. A collector recently bought at public auction in London, for one hundred and fifty-seven guineas, an autograph of Shakespeare : but for nothing a schoolboy can read Hamlet, and can detect secrets of highest concernment yet unpublished therein." And yet " What hath the owner but the sight of it with his eyes."

We are really richer than we think. We often hear of Earth hunger. People envy a great Land-

lord, and fancy how delightful it must be to possess a large estate. But, as Emerson says, "if you own land, the land owns you." Moreover, have we not all, in a better sense—have we not all thousands of acres of our own? The commons, and roads, and footpaths, and the seashore, our grand and varied coast—these are all ours. The sea-coast has, moreover, two great advantages. In the first place, it is for the most part but little interfered with by man, and in the second it exhibits most instructively the forces of Nature. We are all great landed proprietors, if we only knew it. What we lack is not land, but the power to enjoy it. Moreover, this great inheritance has the additional advantage that it entails no labor, requires no management. The landlord has the trouble, but the landscape belongs to every one who has eyes to see it. Thus Kingsley called the heaths round Eversley his "winter garden;" not because they were his in the eye of the law, but in that higher sense in which ten thousand persons may own the same thing.

THE BLESSING OF FRIENDS.

THE BLESSING OF FRIENDS.

“They seem to take away the sun from the world who withdraw friendship from life ; for we have received nothing better from the Immortal Gods, nothing more delightful.”—CICERO.

MOST of those who have written in praise of books have thought they could say nothing more conclusive than to compare them to friends.

“All men,” said Socrates, “have their different objects of ambition—horses, dogs, money, honor, as the case may be ; but for his own part he would rather have a good friend than all these put together.” And again, men know “the number of their other possessions, although they might be very numerous, but of their friends, though but few, they were not only ignorant of the number, but even when they attempted to reckon it to such as asked them, they set aside again some that they had previously counted among their friends ; so little did they allow their friends to occupy their thoughts. Yet in comparison with

what possession, of all others, would not a good friend appear far more valuable?"

"As to the value of other things," says Cicero, "most men differ; concerning friendship all have the same opinion. What can be more foolish than, when men are possessed of great influence by their wealth, power, and resources, to procure other things which are bought by money—horses, slaves, rich apparel, costly vases—and not to procure friends, the most valuable and fairest furniture of life?" And yet, he continues, "every man can tell how many goats or sheep he possesses, but not how many friends." In the choice, moreover, of a dog or of a horse, we exercise the greatest care: we inquire into its pedigree, its training and character, and yet we too often leave the selection of our friends, which is of infinitely greater importance—by whom our whole life will be more or less influenced either for good or evil—almost to chance.

It is no doubt true, as the *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* says, that all men are bores except when we want them. And Sir Thomas Browne quaintly observes that "unthinking heads who have not learnt to be alone, are a prison to themselves if they be not with others; whereas, on the contrary, those whose thoughts are in a fair and hurry within, are sometimes fain to retire into company to be out of the crowd of themselves." Still I do not quite understand Emerson's idea that "men descend to meet." In another place, in-

deed, he qualifies the statement, and says, "Almost all people descend to meet." Even so I should venture to question it, especially considering the context. "All association," he adds, "must be a compromise, and, what is worse, the very flower and aroma of the flower of each of the beautiful natures disappears as they approach each other." What a sad thought! Is it really so; need it be so? And if it were, would friends be any real advantage? I should have thought that the influence of friends was exactly the reverse: that the flower of a beautiful nature would expand, and the colors grow brighter, when stimulated by the warmth and sunshine of friendship.

It has been said that it is wise always to treat a friend, remembering that he may become an enemy, and an enemy, remembering that he may become a friend; and whatever may be thought of the first part of the adage, there is certainly much wisdom in the latter. Many people seem to take more pains and more pleasure in making enemies, than in making friends. Plutarch, indeed, quotes with approbation the advice of Pythagoras "not to shake hands with too many," but as long as friends are well chosen, it is true rather that

"He who has a thousand friends,
Has never a one to spare,
And he who has one enemy,
Will meet him everywhere,"

and unfortunately, while there are few great friends there is no little enemy.

I guard myself, however, by saying again—As long as they are well chosen. One is thrown in life with a great many people who, though not actively bad, though they may not wilfully lead us astray, yet take no pains with themselves, neglect their own minds, and direct the conversation to petty puerilities or mere gossip ; who do not seem to realize that conversation may by a little effort be made most instructive and delightful, without being in any way pedantic ; or, on the other hand, may be allowed to drift into a mere morass of muddy thought and weedy words. There is hardly anyone from whom we may not learn much, if only they will trouble themselves to tell us. Nay, even if they teach us nothing, they may help us by the stimulus of intelligent questions, or the warmth of sympathy. But if they do neither, then indeed their companionship, if companionship it can be called, is mere waste of time, and of such we may well say, “I do desire that we be better strangers.”

Much certainly of the happiness and purity of our lives depends on our making a wise choice of our companions and friends. If our friends are badly chosen they will inevitably drag us down ; if well they will raise us up. Yet many people seem to trust in this matter to the chapter of accident. It is well and right, indeed, to be courteous and considerate to every one with whom we are brought into contact, but to choose them as real friends is another matter. Some seem to

make a man a friend, or try to do so, because he lives near, because he is in the same business, travels on the same line of railway, or for some other trivial reason. There cannot be a greater mistake. These are only, in the words of Plutarch, "the idols and images of friendship."

To be friendly with every one is another matter ; we must remember that there is no little enemy, and those who have ever really loved any one will have some tenderness for all. There is indeed some good in most men. "I have heard much," says Mr. Nasmyth in his charming autobiography, "about the ingratitude and selfishness of the world. It may have been my good fortune, but I have never experienced either of these unfeeling conditions." Such also has been my own experience.

"Men talk of unkind hearts, kind deeds
With coldness still returning.
Alas! the gratitude of men
Has oftener left me mourning."

I cannot, then, agree with Emerson that "we walk alone in the world. Friends such as we desire are dreams and fables. But a sublime hope cheers ever the faithful heart, that elsewhere in other regions of the universal power souls are now acting, enduring, and daring, which can love us, and which we can love."

No doubt, much as worthy friends add to the happiness and value of life, we must in the main

depend on ourselves, and every one is his own best friend or worst enemy.

Sad, indeed, is Bacon's assertion that "there is little friendship in the world, and least of all between equals, which was wont to be magnified. That that is, is between superior and inferior, whose fortunes may comprehend the one to the other." But this can hardly be taken as his deliberate opinion, for he elsewhere says, "but we may go farther, and affirm most truly, that it is a mere and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness." Not only, he adds, does friendship introduce "daylight in the understanding out of darkness and confusion of thoughts;" it "maketh a fair day in the affections from storm and tempests:" in consultation with a friend a man "tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshalleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words; finally, he waxeth wiser than himself, and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation." . . . "But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth, for a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal where there is no love."

With this last assertion I cannot altogether concur. Surely even strangers may be most interesting! and many will agree with Dr. Johnson when, describing a pleasant evening, he summed it up—"Sir, we had a good talk."

Epictetus gives excellent advice when he dissuades from conversation on the very subjects most commonly chosen, and advises that it should be on "none of the common subjects—not about gladiators, nor horse-races, nor about athletes, nor about eating or drinking, which are the usual subjects; and especially not about men, as blaming them;" but when he adds, "or praising them," the injunction seems to me of doubtful value. Surely Marcus Aurelius more wisely advises that "when thou wishest to delight thyself, think of the virtues of those who live with thee; for instance, the activity of one, and the modesty of another, and the liberality of a third, and some other good quality of a fourth. For nothing delights so much as the examples of the virtues, when they are exhibited in the morals of those who live with us and present themselves in abundance, as far as is possible. Wherefore we must keep them before us." Yet how often we know merely the sight of those we call our friends, or the sound of their voices, but nothing whatever of their mind or soul.

We must, moreover, be as careful to keep friends as to make them. If every one knew what one said of the other, Pascal assures us that "there would not be four friends in the world." This I hope and think is too strong, but at any rate try to be one of the four. And when you have made a friend, keep him. Hast thou a friend, says an Eastern proverb, "visit him often, for thorns and brushwood obstruct the road which no one treads."

The affections should not be mere "tents of a night."

Still less does Friendship confer any privilege to make ourselves disagreeable. Some people never seem to appreciate their friends till they have lost them. Anaxagoras described the Mausoleum as the ghost of wealth turned into stone.

"But he who has once stood beside the grave to look back on the companionship which has been for ever closed, feeling how impotent *then* are the wild love and the keen sorrow, to give one instant's pleasure to the pulseless heart, or atone in the lowest measure to the departed spirit for the hour of unkindness, will scarcely for the future incur that debt to the heart which can only be discharged to the dust."

Death, indeed, cannot sever friendship. "Friends," says Cicero, "though absent, are still present; though in poverty they are rich; though weak, yet in the enjoyment of health; and, what is still more difficult to assert, though dead they are alive." This seems a paradox, yet is there not much truth in his explanation? "To me, indeed, Scipio still lives, and will always live; for I love the virtue of that man, and that worth is not yet extinguished. . . . Assuredly of all things that either fortune or time has bestowed on me, I have none which I can compare with the friendship of Scipio."

If, then, we choose our friends for what they are, not for what they have, and if we deserve so great a blessing, then they will be always with us, preserved in absence, and even after death, in the "amber of memory."



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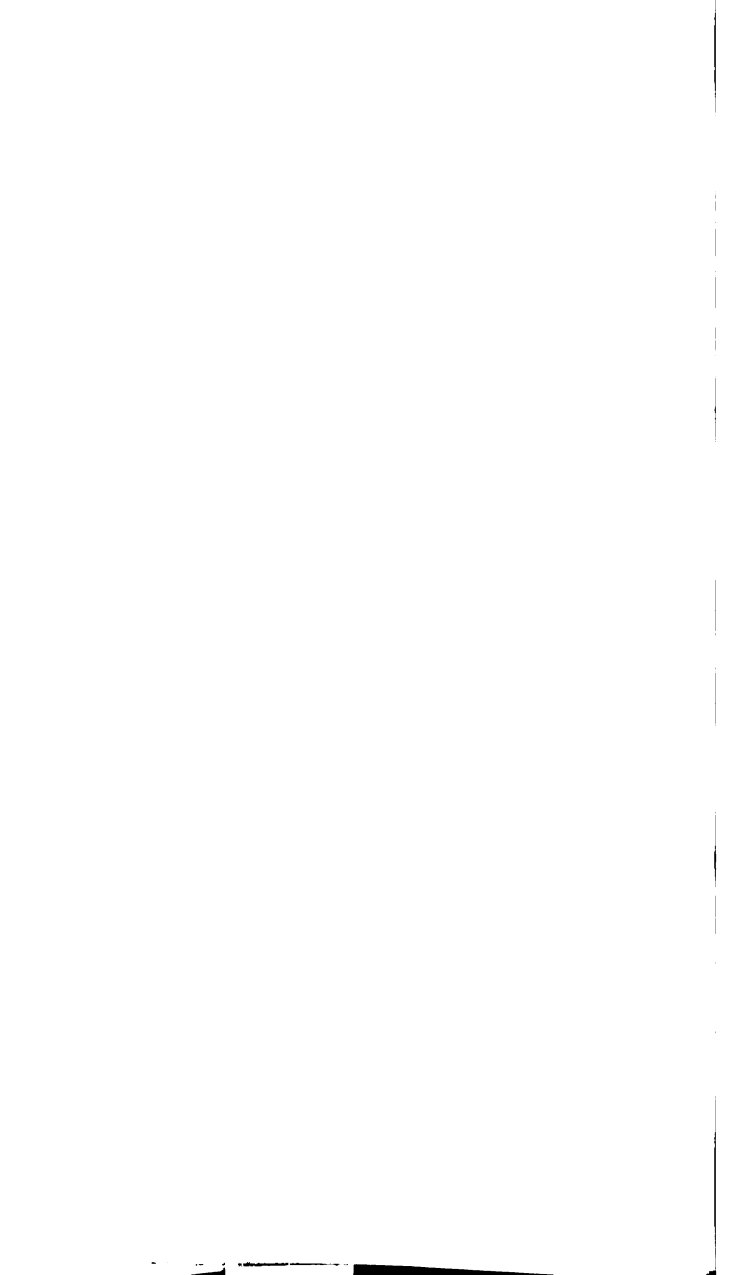
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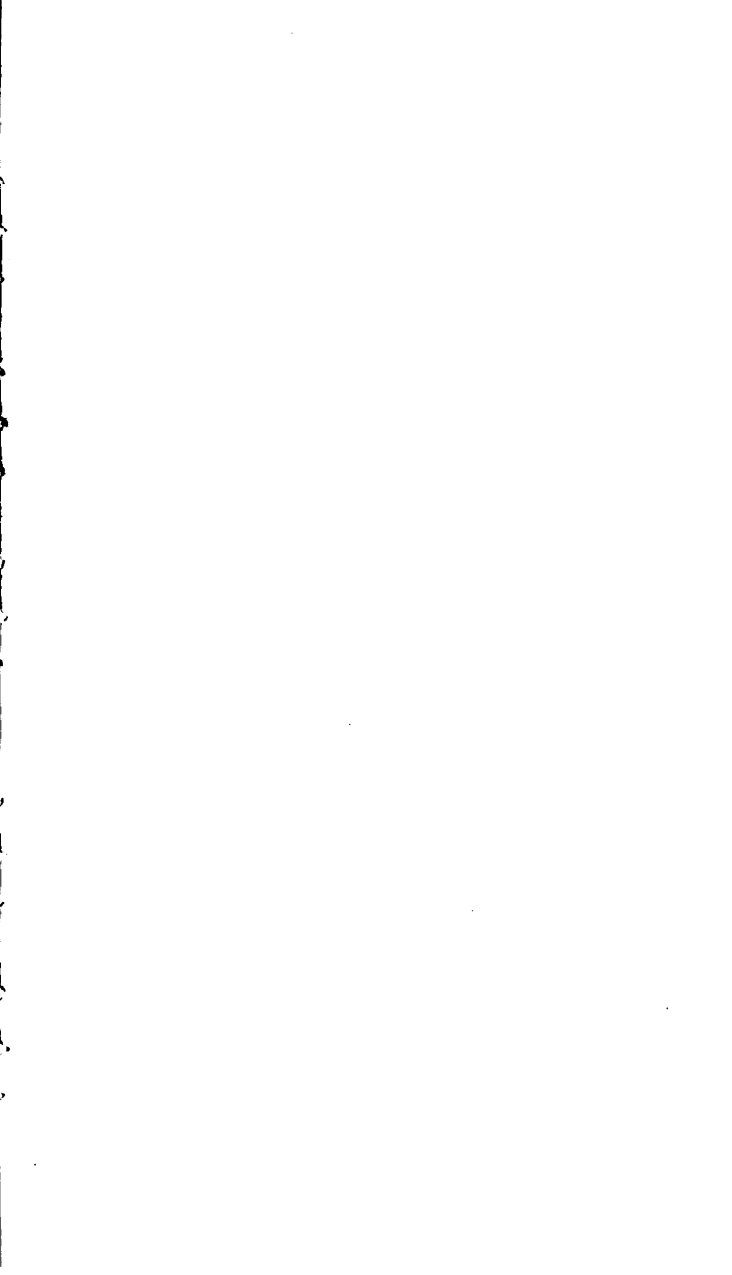
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